

Application No. 10/011,023
Attorney Docket No. AC-002-US
Response to Office Action dated June 14, 2004
Page 5 of 8

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, the Applicant has retained new patent counsel to prosecute this application. The document revoking the old power of attorney and granting the new power is filed concurrently herewith. Please note the contact information for the undersigned counsel.

Additionally, a new declaration from the inventor is attached to correct the priority claim in the prior declaration as noted by the Examiner. Applicant also notes that the Examiner has requested correction of the drawings in light of the informalities identified in Paper No. 5. Applicant will submit formal drawings upon allowance of the claims.

Claims 16-25 are currently pending, all of which have been rejected. In particular, claims 16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Wain (US 4,335,809); claims 18, 19, 22, 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wain in view of Ehrman (US 5,984,786); claims 17 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wain in view of Acres (US 6,431,983); and claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wain in view of Acres and further in view of Ehrman. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The Examiner relies upon Wain as either the sole or primary reference for rejecting each and every claim. By paraphrasing the text of Wain, the Examiner argues that Wain teaches "machines can be controlled independently or collectively to play one of a plurality of games." While this statement in a vacuum may be substantiated by picking and choosing selected portions from Wain, viewing Wain as a whole paints a different picture.

Fundamental to Wain is the object of providing "an entertainment machine ... with which it is possible in a convenient manner to vary the game can be played therewith." Wain at col. 2, lines 49-56. Wain accomplishes this by connecting a plurality of machines to a main control device via a communications link 2 and allowing the main control device 3 to download software for different games into the RAM device 18 of entertainment machines 1. (See, e.g., col. 6, lines 31-50). Thus, the "control" taught by Wain (see, e.g., col. 3, lines 17-29), must be viewed in the context of transmitting and writing different software into the RAM device 18 of each entertainment machine 1. Nowhere does Wain teach that main control device 3 control the actual "play" of the games in real-time (e.g., controlling the start and stop of game play).

Additionally, Wain fails to provide any teachings in regard to the command sets that must be resident on the entertainment machines. Moreover, Wain does not distinguish between generic and game specific command sets. This is not surprising given that Wain only discusses

Application No. 10/011,023
Attorney Docket No. AC-002-US
Response to Office Action dated June 14, 2004
Page 6 of 8

the need for software residing on the entertainment machines 1 and the manner for delivering that software. Wain goes no further.

Turning to the recited claims, Wain differs fundamentally from the claimed invention. In particular, the Examiner cites to figure 1, col. 3, lines 17-29, and claim 1 of Wain as teaching step (c) of claim 16: "storing in each game-specific command set of a satellite computer at least a game-specific start signal and a game-specific stop signal for starting and stopping a respective game program, respectively, on the satellite computer." Other than generally making reference to "program information stored in the ROM/PROM and RAM devices 17, 18" to display a particular game, e.g., rotatable drums or discs of a conventional fruit machine, Wain does not address the command sets in the program information, let alone whether the program information includes generic or game specific command sets. (See Wain at col. 5, line 60-col. 6, line 7). It follows that if Wain fails to provide any teachings as to the command sets in general, there certainly is no teaching of *a game-specific start signal and a game-specific stop signal* as recited in step (c) of claim 16.

As for the portions of Wain cited by the Examiner, no mention is made of command sets, let alone *a game-specific start signal and a game-specific stop signal*. The cited text only discusses the general concept of the entertainment machines being controlled independently by the main control device, but nothing more. As previously explained the "control" taught by Wain must viewed in the context of transmitting and writing different software into the RAM device 18 of each entertainment machine 1. Given the Wain notion of "control," Wain cannot and does not anticipate claim 16.

With respect to step (d) of claim 16, the Examiner cites again to col. 3, lines 17-29 and claim 1 of Wain. In addition to the deficiencies in Wain already discussed, there is no mention in the text cited by the Examiner or elsewhere in Wain of "a generic game start signal ... indexed to the game-specific start signal of the game-specific command set for a respective game program" as recited in step (d) of claim 16. The concept of indexing a generic start signal to the game specific start signal (or indeed any generic to game specific indexing) is foreign to Wain. Again, Wain fails to anticipate claim 16.

The above distinctions between claim 16 and Wain are merely representative of those that exist, but nonetheless are sufficient to distinguish all of the pending claims from Wain. Applicant reserves the right should the need arise in subsequent responses or on appeal to raise further distinctions.

Application No. 10/011,023
Attorney Docket No. AC-002-US
Response to Office Action dated June 14, 2004
Page 7 of 8

Turning to Ehrman, the Examiner incorrectly asserts, just as with Wain, that reference teaches the concept of generic and game specific command sets. As understood, the Examiner likens the object database 36 of Ehrman to the recited generic command set and the rulebase 34 to the recited game specific command set. The object-rule concept of Ehrman is entirely different than the recited generic and game specific command set concept.

As explained in Ehrman (see col. 8, lines 11-54), objects in a checkers game, for example, include the checker pieces, the players, and the board. Rules are the operations to be performed on the objects. The operations include standard mathematical functions, creation and deletion of an object or a property, a print function, the ability to add items to a list and the ability to stop the game. In programming terms, the objects are the variables that are operated upon by the rules. Thus, the objects and rules in Ehrman are related entities, one of which acts upon the other.

In contrast, a generic command set and a game specific command set are both command sets. For example, the recited generic command set and the game specific command set include a game start command. While both command sets include the game start command, the logic for each is different.

Acres also fails to cure the deficiencies of Wain. In particular, Acres relates to providing incentives to game players via a smart card. Although multiple game machines are connected to file server 32, Acres does not disclose use of generic and game specific command sets.

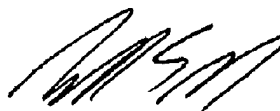
With respect to both Ehrman and Acres, specific recited elements are lacking in these references despite the assertions of the Examiner. Applicant reserves the right should the need arise in subsequent responses or on appeal to raise these further distinctions.

In sum, neither Wain nor Ehrman nor Acres teaches the concept of generic and game specific command codes. Further, neither of the references teaches that such generic and game specific command codes are indexed to the issuance of game commands such as game start and game stop. For these reasons and the others set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the Wain fails to anticipate claims 16 and 21, and that the various combinations of Wain, Ehrman and Acres fail to render obvious claims 17-20 and 22-25.

Application No. 10/011,023
Attorney Docket No. AC-002-US
Response to Office Action dated June 14, 2004
Page 8 of 8

Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are allowable, and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application; the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,



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